

Serial No. 10/048,099
First Office Action Dated 5/21/03

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract. The Abstract has been replaced by a new abstract in Attachment A.

The Examiner has objected to the specification. The specification has been amended to remove any reference to claim numbers. In addition, the specification has been amended to remove a typographical error.

The Examiner has rejected claims 12-16, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over German Ref. No DE 4322226 A1 in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,632,682 to Erdmannsdorfer.

The Examiner has stated that claims 18 and 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Claims 12, 13, 16 and 18 have been canceled without prejudice. New claim 22 has been added which includes the elements of former claim 12 and former claims 13, 16, and 18. In addition, claim 21 was canceled and new claim 23 has been introduced which includes the elements of former claims 12 and 21. Furthermore, new claim 24 has been introduced which includes many of the elements of claim 22. Claims 14, 15, 17 and 19 depend from new claim 22. Thus, the applicant believes that these remaining claims are also patentable.

Claims 1-12, 13, 16, 18 and 21 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 14, 15, 17, and 19 have been amended. New claims 22, 23 and 24 have been added. The applicant believes that the remaining claims are written to overcome the rejections of the Examiner. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests early allowance of the remaining claims.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure: ATTACHMENT A - ABSTRACT

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

Fax No. 703-872-9310

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent by facsimile transmission to the U.S.P.T.O. to Patent Examiner P.M. Lawrence, Jr. at Group No. 1724, to 1-703-872-9310 on September 2, 2003.

William C. Collard
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